

NATIONAL



WILD TURKEY FEDERATION

July 9th, 2007

The Honorable Collin Peterson, Chairman
House Agriculture Committee
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Washington, DC 20005

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Dear Chairman Peterson:

On behalf of the 584,000 members and the 2350 chapters of the National Wild Turkey Federation, I am writing to thank you for the honorable leadership you have shown in crafting a balanced Farm Bill and in particular a strong Conservation Title under such difficult fiscal circumstances.

Along with most of the mainstream conservation and wildlife organizations, we wrote to you in February and asked your serious consideration of providing additional funds in the baseline in order for the Agriculture Committee to meet this country's conservation, forestry, research, and renewable energy goals. Funding such priorities as the next generation of sustainable renewable energy from cellulosic sources, while also continuing to provide fish and wildlife, water, and soil conservation benefits to our citizens is of great importance. We mentioned that the challenges of wetland conservation; invasive species; aquatic systems health; forest health; energy security and the move to bio-fuels; alteration of native habitats; maintaining working families on the land; and even the consequences yet uncertain of global climate change would all benefit from more robust funding.

Mr. Chairman, we believe you have taken that request to heart and drafted a bill that confirms significant increases in conservation spending from the 2002 farm bill by continuing the Wetland Reserve Program and increasing funding for the enormously popular Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), while at the same time keeping an adequate safety net for farmers whose private land is critical for wildlife habitat. In particular, we are pleased with the inclusion of language that places forestry and forest habitats on equal footing with other resources of concern in the EQIP program. Your bill also includes energy initiatives designed to improve forest management and supply woody biomass and cellulosic ethanol to meet the goals of reducing our dependence on foreign oil. We hope to continue working with you to develop language that will improve the management of pineland CRP tracts across the country in order for these acres to meet the wildlife benefit goals of CRP and additionally contribute to energy production.

Mr. Chairman, we thank you again for your discerning leadership on the Conservation Title and the Farm Bill overall. Despite \$60 billion less to spend for commodities than in 2002, as well as reduced funding for conservation, you have developed a farm bill that is balanced and fair. We look forward to working with you and supporting your bill as it moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

Rob Keck
Chief Executive Officer